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Gold King Mine Management Report - 09 10 2015.doc

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EPA internal update: September 10, 2015 1500 ET

HQ EOC Tues/Thurs reporting cycle

GOLD KING MINE RELEASE MANAGEMENT REPORT



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Situation Summary

Overview: On August 5, a large release of mine wastewater into Cement Creek occurred while an EPA site assessment team was conducting site investigation activities. Loose material collapsed into the cave entry and pressurized water began leaking above the mine tunnel, spilling an estimated three million gallons of water stored behind the collapsed material into Cement Creek, a tributary of the Animas River. The release's path flowed through three of EPA's Regions: Region 8—Colorado, Utah and the Southern Ute Tribe; Region 6—New Mexico; and, Region 9—Navajo Nation. The mine water is being treated in a series of four settling ponds constructed near the portal. Aerial reconnaissance combined with observations on the ground indicate that the plume associated with the Gold King Mine release has dissipated in downstream sections of the San Juan River and Lake Powell.

On September 9, OSWER AA Mathy Stanislaus appeared as a witness before the House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology hearings on the Gold King Mine

Release.

Public Website: A public-facing website has been created for the response: <http://www2.epa.gov/goldkingmine>. Press releases, sampling data, fact sheets and other information are being posted to the website. See below for information that has been posted to the site for this operational period.

EPA Public Information Number: EPA has a public information number through the National Call Center (844-607-9700) operated by EPA HQ. To total of 225 calls were received during its operation by the former United EPA Area Command (UEAC).

Response Organization: The HQ EOC activated to Level 1 Operations on August 11. EPA Regions 6, 8 and 9 are integrated into an Incident Command Post Gold King (ICPGK) in Durango, CO. The ICPGK is monitoring drinking water sampling, collecting sampling results and disseminating these results within Regions 8, 6 and 9. Lastly, the ICPGK continues to host visits from officials from Colorado, Utah, EPA Region 8 and the Navajo Nation. On September 8, ICPGK was visited by Lisa Marie Jaceks of the Earth Island Institute after her visit the previous day to the Gold King Mine site with a reporter from the Huffington Post. On September 9, ICPGK held a meeting with La Plata County to update them on the response.

Summary of Water/Food Deliveries by EPA Region: The table below shows the number of deliveries and quantity (in gallons) of water and food deliveries by EPA Regions to date.

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Region</u>	<u>September 8</u>			<u>Cumulative</u>		
		<u>Deliveries</u>	<u>Quantity</u>	<u>Quantity (Hay Bales)</u>	<u>Deliveries</u>	<u>Quantity</u>	<u>Quantity (Hay Bales)</u>
Potable Water Deliveries	Region 8	0	0			62,000	
Livestock/Agricultural Water Deliveries	Region 8	0	0		47	141,980	
	Region 6				59	1,104,990	
	Region 9*	0	0		13	218,400	
	BIA**	0	0		7	975,888	
Agricultural Food Deliveries	Region 6				1		244
	Region 9	0	0	0	14		5,376

* Water deliveries in Region 9 are being handled by the Navajo Tribal Utility Authority; ** Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) delivered water for livestock to seven locations in the Navajo Nation from approximately August 12 to August 31.

Summary of Sampling by EPA Region: The table below shows the number of samples collected by EPA Regions for each matrix to date:

<u>Matrix</u>	<u>Region</u>	<u>Number of Samples on September 8</u>	<u>Cumulative for Response*</u>
Private Drinking Water	Region 8	4	371
	Region 6	0	285
Surface Water	Region 8	8	412
	Region 6	9	352
	Region 9	0	250
Sediment	Region 8	8	171
	Region 6	9	363
	Region 9	0	196

*Compiled from the SCRIBE database

Region 8 (Durango, CO)

Highlights: The Region 8 Administrator, Shaun McGrath, and Doug Ammon, Chief of the Site Assessment and Remedy Decisions Branch in OSRTI, met with the LaPlata County Commissioners on September 3 to discuss Superfund and NPL listing.

Drinking Water Sampling: Region 8 continues to deliver water and assess the water systems of residences with MCL exceedances. Region 8 is focusing efforts on those private drinking water wells located within 300 feet of the banks of the Animas River (including connected canals), between Baker's Bridge and the Colorado/New Mexico state line. Region 8 is also providing bottled water services to three residences.

Surface Water & Sediment Sampling: Region 8 continues to operate treatment and sedimentation ponds at the mine site which are treating water by lowering acidity levels and removing dissolved metals. Treated water from the last treatment pond is discharging into Cement Creek. On September 8, EPA recorded a flow rate of 593

gallons per minute and a pre-treatment pH of 3.65 from the Gold King Mine adit portal. Bolts and wire mesh were installed in and around the adit/portal to the Gold King Mine in an effort to stabilize the area.

Irrigation Ditch Sampling: Irrigation ditches drawing from the Animas River in Colorado are now open and available for use.

Region 6 (Farmington, NM)

Highlights: EPA has sent the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) validated data for the following:

- Surface water sampling analytical data from August 6 – 25;
- Intake sediment sampling analytical data from August 10 – 27;
- Irrigation ditch sediment sampling analytical data from August 13 – 14; and
- Private well data from August 10 – 14, August 19 – 21, and August 24 – 25.

Drinking Water Sampling: Region 6 completed private water well sampling on August 27. Seven private wells that had an MCL or EPA Regional Screening Level exceedances were either attributed to background concentrations or were not related to the Gold King Mine Release.

Surface Water & Sediment Sampling: EPA continues to collect water quality samples from nine locations in the river near intakes for the Aztec, Farmington, Lower Valley Water Users Association, Morningstar Water Supply System and the North Star Water User Association.

Irrigation Ditch Sampling: The irrigation ditch sampling effort has been completed.

Region 9 (Shiprock, NM)

Highlights: Navajo law enforcement representatives are unable to support sampling on a daily basis, so sampling will be scaled back to Mondays and Thursdays after August 29.

Drinking Water Sampling: Region 9 is not sampling private drinking water wells at this time.

Surface Water & Sediment Sampling: Starting on August 31, the number of sample locations was reduced to five and are being sampled twice weekly.

Agriculture/Livestock: On September 8, Region 9 received a request for hay deliveries

from five chapters of the Navajo Nation. The Upper Fruitland chapter received a hay delivery on September 9. Three other chapter (Beclabito, Oljato, and Mexican Water) are scheduled to receive hay deliveries on September 10. The Navajo Mountain chapter has also requested a hay delivery but not schedule has been set for this delivery. Each chapter will receive one truckload of 384 hay bales for a total of 1,920 hay bales.

EPA Headquarters

The HQ EOC has been activated at Level 1 Operations for this incident. HQ EOC tasks include:

- assistance to the ICPGK with staffing and funding needs;
- coordination among EPA Regions, laboratories and HQ national program offices;
- participation in data calls to assist with interpretation of water and sediment data; and
- exploration of various authorities and funding sources that might be available in responding to this incident.

HQ EOC EU: The EOC EU worked with the EOC PIO to post sediment and surface water sampling data taken on September 8 and 9 from various locations along the Animas and San Juan Rivers have been posted to the website. On September 8th the HQ EOC posted graphs to show the trending concentrations of all 24 metals in surface water over time. These trend graphs were created from pre-event and post-event data posted to the website between August 10 and August 30. EPA is posting 576 graphs to show the trending concentrations of metals in surface water at the 24 sampling locations where five or more samples have been collected.

HQ EOC Water: A new draft long-term monitoring plan has been shared with internal EPA stakeholders but has not yet been released to the public.

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HQ EOC OGC: EOC OGC continues to provide a review of publicly-released information.

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HQ EOC PIO: EOC PIO has/is:

- Coordinating with JIC and OPA to follow up with press and public inquiries;

- Responded to interview requests;
- Posted data of new sediment and surface water samples collected from Region 6 and Region 8 along the Animas and San Juan Rivers on August 27, 28, 31 and September 1 and 2;
- Released three new documents -- September 4 memo: "Interim Guidance for Continuation of Work and Development of List of Superfund Mining and Mineral Processing Sites," Sept. 4 memo: "Review of Regional and Area Contingency Plans for Downstream Notifications," and September 7 planning document: "Gold King Mine Stakeholders Alert and Notification Plan";
- Released 576 trending graphs to show the concentrations of all 24 metals in the river;
- Updated social media posts about Mathy Stanislaus' September 4 visit to Silverton, CO visit on Twitter, Instagram and Pinterest; and
- Posted four photos taken by ASPECT to Flickr.

HQ EOC Finance: EOC Finance reviewed timecards for EPA staff working in the EOC to ensure accurate account charging. EOC Finance is also working with ICPGK on additional funding support.

Other HQ Activities: The Environmental Response Team (ERT) continues to provide support to the regions and HQ EOC on water treatment optimization. ERT staff will serve as Health and Safety Officers in Durango, CO through September 15.

NUMBER OF PERSONNEL INVOLVED:

<u>Region/Function</u>	<u>EPA Personnel</u>	<u>EPA Contractors</u>	<u>Coast Guard Personnel</u>	<u>Other Federal, State, Local and Tribal Entities</u>	<u>Total</u>
Mine	3	14	6	2	25
ICPGK	24	12	3	0	39
Region 6	0	7	0	0	7
Region 9	0	2	0	0	2
HQ EOC	10	1	0	0	11
Total	37	36	9	2	84

*HQ EOC numbers reflect personnel supporting the response during the current operational period.
Regional numbers reflect personnel responding to the incident on September 8.

FINANCE:

<i>Estimated Response Support Costs as of September 8</i>					
<u>Region</u>	<u>EPA Cumulative Expended Payroll</u>	<u>EPA Cumulative Expended Travel</u>	<u>EPA Cumulative Other Charges</u>	<u>Cumulative Contract Costs</u>	<u>Total Cumulative Costs Expended</u>
Region 8	\$844,857	\$175,433	\$44,450	\$2,733,314	\$3,798,054
Region 6	\$506,783	\$128,350	\$12,989	\$2,440,913	\$3,089,035
Region 9	\$599,040	\$90,000	\$0	\$900,506	\$1,589,546
TOTAL	\$1,950,680	\$393,783	\$57,439	\$6,074,733	\$8,476,635

<i>Estimated Burn Rates as of September 8</i>	
<u>Region</u>	<u>Estimated Daily Burn Rate</u>
Region 8	\$131,920
Region 6	\$45,050
Region 9	\$60,816
TOTAL	\$237,786

*Calculations have been revised to more accurately reflect daily burn rates.

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